United Nations E/2014/NGO/10

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 May 2014

Original: English

2014 session
Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda*
High-level segment: annual ministerial review

Statement submitted by Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

14-32477 (E) 190514

Please recycle

Statement

A goal on social protection floors for everyone must be elaborated in the post-2015 development agenda. Implementation of national social protection floors, as outlined in the International Labour Organization (ILO) recommendation No. 202 of June 2012, would address ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and provide for a consistent and coherent way for sustaining gains in the future. If implemented, they are a step in the right direction towards a transformational agenda leaving no one behind. ILO recommendation 202 was accepted unanimously by the member States of ILO and an equal number of national workers and employer delegations. To date, it is supported by more than 90 civil society organizations.

Rights-based national social protection floors are overarching, comprehensive and indispensable social policy tools for achieving the eradication of poverty and the reduction of inequality. Well-designed social protection floors will proactively enhance gender equality because social protection guarantees have multiple and interconnected beneficial effects, which can cause a virtuous circle.

The Commission on Social Development at its fifty-second session encourages Governments to continue to develop, improve and implement inclusive, effective and sustainable social protection systems and social protection floors on the basis of national priorities for all members of society. The Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-eighth session named social protection as a way of addressing the multiple and intersecting factors contributing to the disproportionate impact of poverty on women and girls over the life cycle.

Social protection floors are:

(a) Conceptually clear. They embody a comprehensive and coherent goal for the social dimension of sustainable human development that avoids competition between different social goals and are being successfully developed at the national level;

(b) Technically possible but still ambitious. While proven to be feasible and affordable, they are flexible in means, clear on objectives, concrete and measurable;

(c) Politically accepted and acceptable. Social protection floors emerge from participatory national policy development and standards and are already accepted by global consensus.

Social protection floors have also proved that they can be used to eradicate extreme poverty, reduce inequality, enhance gender equality, improve the educational status of people, ensure health gains for underprivileged and vulnerable groups and develop a more productive workforce.

Fiscal space for social protection floors exists in virtually every country with many options available. All that is required is the political will to invest in people. Effective country-specific social protection floors can gradually expand and are affordable and financially sustainable through the reallocation of public expenditures. Financing social protection floors can be achieved by cutting back on military expenditures, increasing tax revenues, fighting illicit financial flows, restructuring debt and adopting a more accommodative macroeconomic framework. The implementation of social protection floors can offer important macroeconomic

benefits and increase the presence of countercyclical buffers to reduce the negative effects of economic downswings.

Well-designed social protection floors serve as economy and social stabilizers in times of crisis and should never be compromised in times of fiscal crisis. Social protection floors offer genuine possibilities for addressing ongoing and emerging challenges.